



REGIONAL NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USDA TO GATHER DATA ABOUT ON-FARM LABOR

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – MARCH 2, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during the second half of April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 3500 farmers and ranchers in the Mountain Region states of Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

“The beginning of the year is the time when agricultural producers plan out the rest of their growing season and it is a great time to assess on-farm labor needs,” said William Meyer, Director, Mountain Regional Field Office. “The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey allows federal policymakers to base farm labor policies on accurate information.”

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor use statistics gathered in the Agricultural Labor Survey to establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

In the survey, NASS asks participants to answer a variety of questions about hired farm labor on their operations, including total number of hired farm workers, total hours worked, base wage rate, and total gross wages paid for the weeks of January 12-18 and April 12-18. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online.

“By asking about two separate time periods each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation,” said Meyer. “This approach reduces the number of times we survey farm businesses while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available.”

As with all NASS surveys, the results of this survey will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified. NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the May 28 *Farm Labor* report. These and all NASS reports are available online at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/>

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